

VZCZCXRO3455
RR RUEHDBU RUEHPW RUEHSL
DE RUEHBUL #2362 2271249
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 151249Z AUG 09
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0828
INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS KABUL 002362

DEPARTMENT FOR SRAP, SCA/FO, SCA/A, EUR/RPM
STATE PASS TO AID FOR ASIA/SCAA
USFOR-A FOR POLAD

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [KDEM](#) [PGOV](#) [AF](#)
SUBJECT: Spot Report: Election Activities in Nangarhar

Nangarhar's Karzai Backers Squabble Over Date of Election Rally

¶1. (U) President Karzai is expected to visit Jalalabad for a pre-election rally either August 16 or 17, but the exact date is in dispute between two rival camps, each claiming to run Karzai's official campaign. It is not clear which date Karzai will choose to make an appearance in Jalalabad, and several local political observers are warning the dispute could result in Karzai cancelling a Jalalabad visit altogether.

¶2. (U) Local power broker Haji Mohammad Zahir, of Nangarhar's influential Arsalie family, has announced that he is running Karzai's re-election campaign, and has planned a rally featuring a Karzai appearance for August 16. His uncle, Haji Din Mohammad, is Karzai's national campaign advisor, and named Haji Zahir as head of Karzai's campaign in Nangarhar. However, a group of parliamentarians opposed to the Arsalie family have set up a rival re-election committee, and are urging Karzai to make a Jalalabad appearance on August 17. The parliamentarians claim to have Karzai's support for their efforts.

¶3. (U) Negotiations between the two groups to arrive at an agreed upon date for a Karzai rally in Jalalabad have so far got nowhere. As a result of the squabble, the actual date of Karzai's rally is being viewed locally as Karzai's way of favoring one local camp over the other.

Dr. Abdullah Abdullah Campaigns in Nangarhar

¶4. (U) Presidential candidate Dr. Abdullah Abdullah held three separate rallies in Nangarhar August 15, visiting three districts. These included the remote, mountainous district of Hisarak, dominated by the Ahmedzai tribe, Shirzad district, within the Khogyani tribal area, and Mohmand Dara, populated mostly by members of the Mohmand tribe.

Nangarhar Provincial Council Elections Overview

¶5. (U) A total of 275 candidates are vying to be a member of the 19-member Nangarhar Provincial Council (PC). Eleven of the seats are held by incumbents who are seeking a second term, including three women. After the election, the PC is required by law to reserve a total of five seats for women. This election is dominated by candidates representing the three traditional power families of Nangarhar, including Haji Din Mohammad's Arsalie family, as well as the families of Hazrat Ali and Haji Zaman. In addition, Hezb-I Islami, the dominant political party in Nangarhar, is fielding several viable candidates. Other candidates have tribal backing.

¶6. (U) The Arsalie family is backing five viable candidates, including Haji Jamal Khan Qadir, the nephew of Haji Din Mohammad. Hazrat Ali is also backing five viable candidates, including current PC Deputy Tahir Omar, and female incumbent Habiba Kaker Qazizada,

the wife of the Dar-i-Noor District Governor. Haji Zaman's son, Jaweed Zaman, is considered a front runner. Of the four viable candidates backed by the Hezb-I Islami party, Dr. Abdul Qahar and Hdaytullah Malim Abdul Ali are considered likely to do well.

EIKENBERRY